SERVING THE TOTAL FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY

JANUARY 22, 1992

®RESTAURANTS & INSTITUTIONS

A CAHNERS PUBLICATION

R&I's 1992 AMERICAN FOOD PORTFOLIO

★

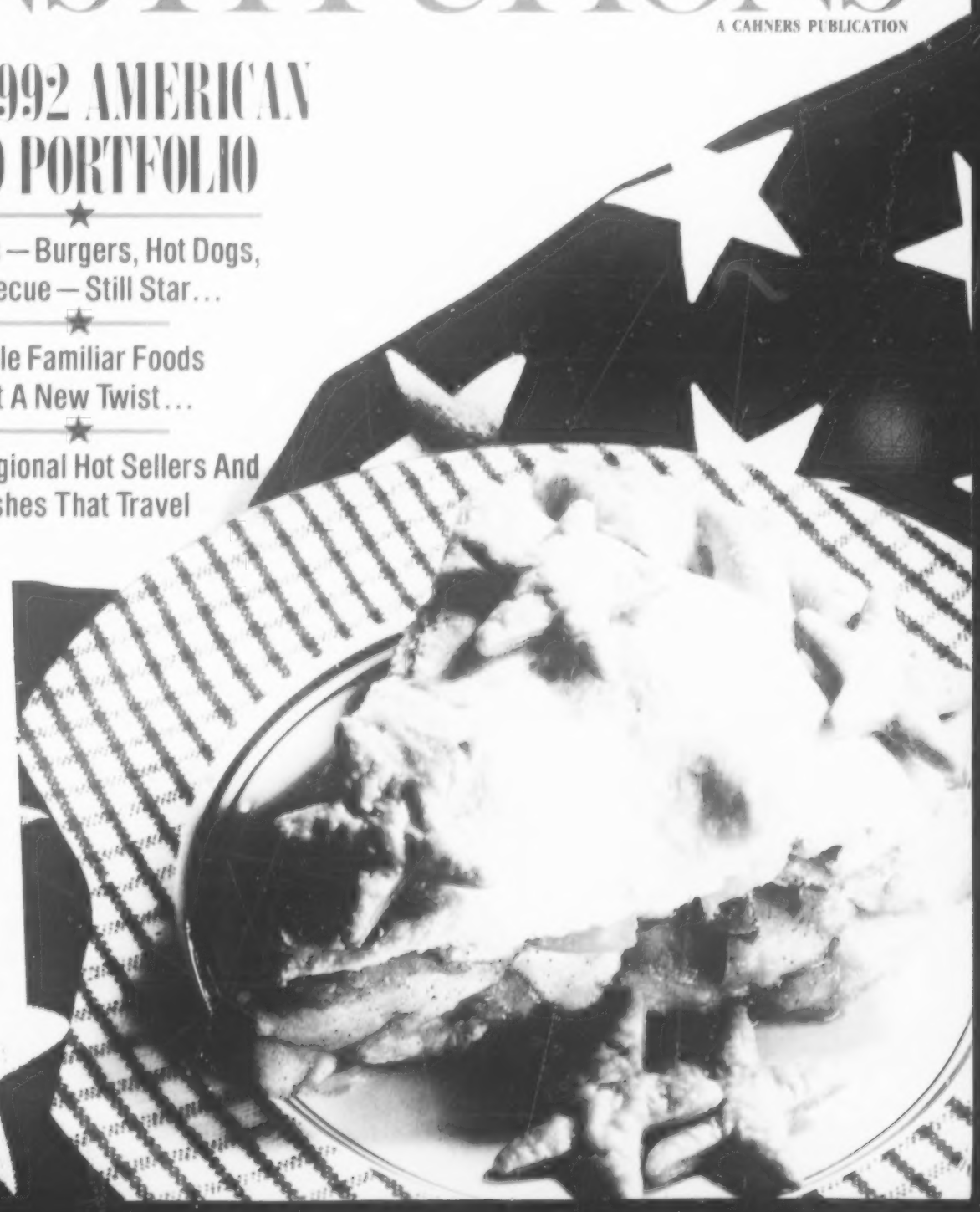
Classics — Burgers, Hot Dogs, Barbecue — Still Star...

★

While Familiar Foods Get A New Twist...

★

Plus: Regional Hot Sellers And Dishes That Travel



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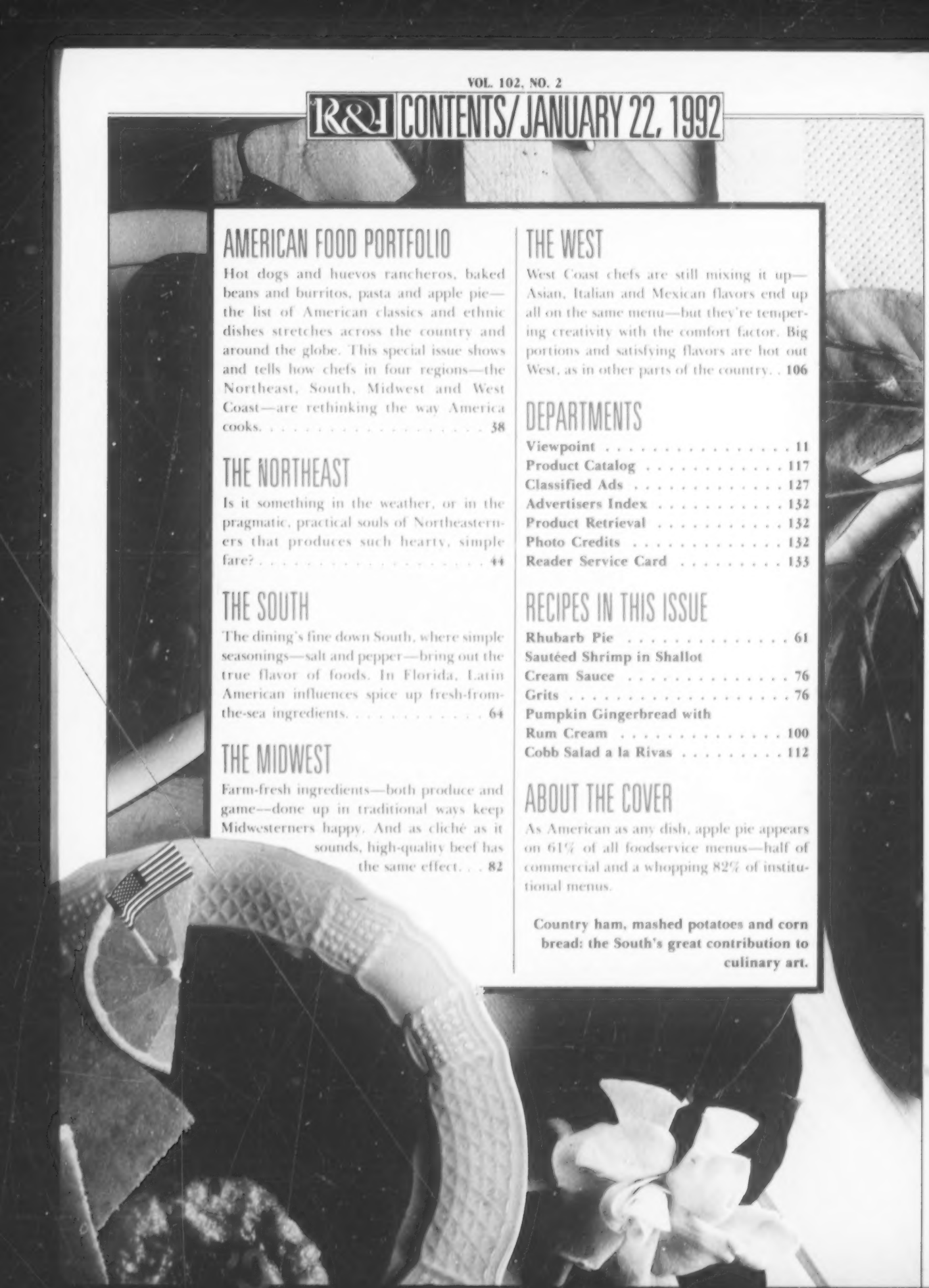

AMERICAN FOOD PORTFOLIO

Hot dogs and huevos rancheros, baked beans and burritos, pasta and apple pie—the list of American classics and ethnic dishes stretches across the country and around the globe. This special issue shows and tells how chefs in four regions—the Northeast, South, Midwest and West Coast—are rethinking the way America cooks. 38

THE NORTHEAST

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As American as any dish, apple pie appears on 61% of all foodservice menus—half of commercial and a whopping 82% of institutional menus.

Country ham, mashed potatoes and corn bread: the South's great contribution to culinary art.

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PEOPLE TO WATCH IN 1992

From Ed Rensi to Burt Sugarman, these nine chain executives bear watching this year because their work promises to shape chain foodservice for the rest of the decade. 12

FOR CHART HOUSE, LIFE'S A BEACH

The Solana Beach, Calif., dinner-house operator hopes Beaches, its new "fun food" concept, will balance its stable of upscale restaurants. Plus, news about Outback Steakhouses, Sbarro, Carl's Jr. and Au Bon Pain. 19

FAST-FOOD FACTS

About one-quarter of this country's adults are "heavy" fast-food users, meaning they visit such a restaurant more than three times a week. Read up on them, as well as on KFC's altered advertisements and Chef's Takeout, a concept that really talks turkey. . . 22

SPICY BREAKFASTS

McDonald's, Carl's Jr. and Taco Bell are rolling breakfast burritos nationwide. But will spicy starters perk up soft breakfast sales? Industry watchers say yes, especially if the burritos come with a discount. 28

FIVE HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

Or so thinks Arby's CEO Victor Posner, who has named not one president, but five executive vice presidents for the roast-beef chain. Each is responsible for a different aspect of operations, and so far, his plan seems to be working. 30

New restaurants that test equipment and food will help McDonald's USA shore up flat sales and margins, says President Ed Rensi. Also on his plate: burgerless dinner menus and a pizza rollout.

Ownership Outback-Style

Would you pay $25,000 to be a restaurant manager?

All 50 general managers at the **Outback Steakhouse** chain have.

To attract and motivate high-caliber general managers, Tampa, Fla.-based Outback sells each one a 10% stake in the restaurant he or she runs. The chain also requires that each sign a five-year employment agreement.

The result: "We have 50 people who look at their businesses as owners and try to capitalize on opportunities they see," says Chairman and CEO Chris Sullivan.

On average, Outback managers earn about $85,000 a year: a base salary of $45,000 plus 10% of the restaurant's cash flow, which currently averages $400,000, says Sullivan.

The dinner-only steakhouse chain plans to add about 25 new units in 1992. Last year, systemwide sales totaled $95 million. **—R.C.**

Chart House Unveils Two New Concepts

Solana Beach, Calif.-based **Chart House** is developing two new restaurant concepts intended to give the operator of upscale dinner houses more predictable growth and insulate it from trade-downs.

Beaches is aimed at the low-price "fun food" end of the restaurant spectrum. It will offer salads, burgers, tacos and finger foods for $5 to $10. Average unit volume is projected at $2.2 million per year, with a cash outlay per restaurant of about $850,000.

Mango's is a midscale steakhouse with a South Pacific theme. Menu prices will range from $7 to $13. The company anticipates average unit sales of more than $2 million per year, with a cash investment of about $700,000 per restaurant.

Chart House says the first Mango's and Beaches units will open in Southern California in the first half of 1992. **—R.C.**

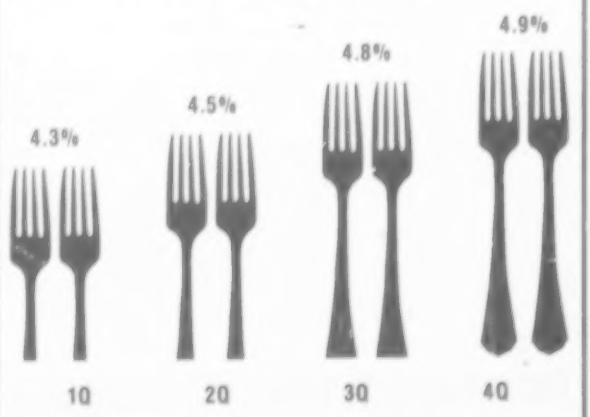
In Brief

Sbarro has purchased 10-unit **Square Pan Pizza**, which operates mall restaurants and pizza carts in San Diego and the Pacific Northwest. Sbarro, which is testing its own pizza cart in an office complex on Long Island, says it will study Square Pan's kiosk technology. Meanwhile, it has signed an exclusive franchise agreement with **Scotts Hospitality**, Toronto, that calls for Scotts to open 100 Sbarro units in Canada over the next 10 years. Sbarro says it expects a similar agreement with its U.K. franchisee, **Forte Group**, to develop units in Germany. . . . **Carl's Jr.** is rolling out a computerized labor-scheduling system that in test cut labor costs by up to one percentage point and raised sales per restaurant by as much as two and a half points. . . . **Au Bon Pain** is making a major push into catering, says Louis Kane, co-chairman. The chain's Midwest franchisee, **ABP Midwest**, generates 15% of sales through catering. Au Bon Pain is "just breaking the surface," with 2.5% of systemwide sales coming from catering, Kane says. The chain has established a central catering office in its Boston headquarters. . . . **JB's Restaurants** will convert 15 to 20 JB's to **HomeTown Buffets**, says President Fred Gonzales. . . . To improve customer service, **Sizzler** is adding guest hosts to its restaurants to explain the menu. Research disclosed that patrons found Sizzler's line to be confusing and unfriendly, says CEO Richard Bermingham. . . . **Uno Restaurant Corp.** says it will double sales of its pizzas through supermarkets to $4 million this year. **—Rajan Chaudhry**

MENU PRICE HIKES TO ACCELERATE

After growing only 3.6% year-over-year in 1991, the Consumer Price Index for foods consumed away from home is expected to rise an average of 4.6% in 1992.

% change vs. 1991, CPI food away from home



Source: Cahners Economics

KFC, Dunkin' Donuts Curb Health Claims

Both Kentucky Fried Chicken and Dunkin' Donuts will remove some health claims from their print advertising, under pressure from New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams.

KFC, Louisville, Ky., and Dunkin' Donuts, Randolph, Mass., both signed agreements with Abrams in October to remove what he called "inappropriate" health claims from their ads. Abrams' office held that KFC misled the public by comparing the total fat and calories in its Skinfree Crispy product to those in its Extra Crispy pieces, which are double-battered and larger.

Dunkin' Donuts will no longer advertise that its products are "free of cholesterol and more than 90% free of saturated fat." Abrams said the claim is meaningless, since each doughnut still gets 46% of its calories from fat, more than the 30% recommended by most health experts.

Abrams is one of a handful of state enforcement officials—including the attorneys general of California, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Texas and Florida—vowing to patrol the gap left by the Nutritional Labeling and Education Act, slated to take effect in 1993. Restaurants are exempt from health-claims regulations in the law, passed last October. **—Brian Quinton**

Chef's Takeout Talks Turkey

Tom Hanson thinks he has developed "the last great franchise" in Chef's Takeout, a six-year-old chain of three restaurants based in Burbank, Calif. The chain features 20-lb. turkeys that are carved to order.

Six cook-and-hold ovens finish the turkeys and hold them at a steady temperature overnight. The cooks start carving at 11 the next morning. Meanwhile, another worker loads pans of macaroni and cheese, lasagna and barbecued beef in a combination oven.

Chef's Takeout carves both turkeys and food costs.

The units do 48% of their business in takeout. Besides the No. 1 seller, turkey, either in a complete entree ($5.95) or a 5-oz. sandwich ($3.79), Hanson offers barbecued ribs, roast chicken and meatloaf. He hopes to start franchising soon, and to have four or five new franchised units up by summer. **—B.Q.**

Frequent Diners Favor Drive-Thrus, Lunch

About one-fourth of adults in the United States are heavy fast-food users, dining at quick-service restaurants three or more times per week. These heavy users typically account for 60% of all fast-food visits, according to Sandelman & Associates, a Brea, Calif.-based consulting company.

The firm's Fast-Track studies of fast-food awareness and usage have revealed the following facts about the important heavy users group:

☐ Heavy users favor drive-thru dining. They opt for the drive-thru on 46% of their visits.

☐ Heavy users prefer lunch. Almost 53% of their fast-food visits are for lunch, compared with 44% for light users.

☐ Compared to the average fast-food patron, the heavy user is more apt to be male, younger, less educated, single and a member of a larger household. **—R.C.**

WHAT CAUSES FOODSERVICE FIRES?

Fire is always a danger in foodservice, of course. But a 1991 National Fire Protection Agency study says more than half of all foodservice blazes from 1984 through 1988 started somewhere other than at the stove.

Cooking equipment	40.7%
Suspicious cause	16.1
Electrical systems	11.0
Other equipment	7.2
Heating systems	6.8
Appliances, air conditioning	5.3
Smoking	5.2
Open flame, embers	3.2
Other	4.5

National Fire Protection Agency, 1991

Hyatt Launches Healthful Menu

Hyatt Hotels Corp., Chicago, is launching a new menu chainwide this month that spotlights back-to-basics fresh, wholesome foods at moderate prices.

"It's not a diet menu," says Robert Dallain, Hyatt vice president of food and beverage. "Portion sizes are normal. It's just well-balanced, good eating."

The new three-meal menu, "Cuisine Naturelle," comprises about 80 items, from appetizers to desserts, says Dallain. Entree prices start at about $5 for a turkey burger. Most dishes fall in the $8 to $12 range.

The menu features organically grown produce, and includes egg-white omelets, buckwheat french toast with light syrup, breast of chicken with mixed greens, grilled monkfish, and marinated pork tenderloin with whole-wheat pasta.

Hyatt will offer the new menu as a supplement to its current bills of fare. The company is contemplating printing nutritional breakdowns on the menu, says Dallain.

In Florida test markets, up to 35% of customers ordered from the menu at dinner, says Dallain. "I think it's what people want in the '90s," he says. —**R.C.**

Cajun Joe's Launches New Value Menu

Cajun Joe's is rolling out a new menu that features a dark-meat-only value tier for its Chicken Meals, Family Paks and Chicken Only offerings. The menu creates a new low price point, $1.69 for a two-piece meal with the purchase of a drink. The chain hopes to avoid discounting by focusing future promotions on the value-priced items. . . . **Shoney's** will expand its new pie shops systemwide over the next 16 months, says Chairman and CEO Leonard Roberts. In test, the shops boosted dessert sales to 6% of sales from 3%. Investment per unit is about $28,000; Roberts expects sales-to-investment will exceed 2.3 to 1. . . . **Subway** is introducing private-label potato chips. Three additional types of Subway-brand chips—barbecue, dip style, and sour cream and onion—are in test in Indiana. . . . **Brown's Chicken & Pasta** has added a line of "four-star sandwiches," priced from $1.59 to $2.49. Varieties include meatball, Italian sausage, Italian beef, chicken breast and fish fillet. . . . **Fresh Choice** this month is widening its range of fat-free, cholesterol-free offerings to include five new salads and three new soups, but low sales prompted the chain to drop its three varieties of no-fat muffins. New low-fat muffins are in the works . . . **Cracker Barrel** will roll out a bank of 70 "daily special" recipes currently in test in more than 15 stores, says Chairman Dan Evins. . . . **Pizzeria Uno** has launched a new line of gourmet thin-crust pizzas called Pizzettas available in six varieties and priced about $6 to $8. To improve value, the chain now offers bread and salads with all entrees. . . . **Au Bon Pain** is spending $15,000 per unit to add name-brand gourmet coffees to all its bakery-cafes. The costs cover water filters, grinders and holding equipment. The family-dining chain will offer one light roast coffee, one decaffeinated variety and rotating special dark roast coffees, says Co-Chairman Louis Kane. Coffee is approximately 16% of Au Bon Pain's mix. . . . **Sizzler Restaurants** will add two new products, Cobb salad and Chinese chicken salad, to its grill menu in 1992, says CEO Richard Bermingham. The items are priced at $4.99. —**R.C.**

Fresh Choice is introducing fat-free, cholesterol-free soups and salads. But it also is adding back some fat to its muffins.

FIGHTING FOODBORNE ILLNESS

Almost 80% of all U.S. food-poisoning outbreaks occur at foodservice establishments. Improper refrigeration is the culprit more than 40% of the time.

% of all outbreaks caused by the following

Improper holding temperature	43%
Inadequate cooking	20
Poor personal hygiene	20
Contaminated equipment	12
Unsafe source	8
Other	8

Source: The Centers for Disease Control

R&I ACTION EXPRESS

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